

Tobacco Free Campus Policy- Frequently Asked Questions

❖ Why should UW Oshkosh make this change?

We want to support a safe and healthy learning and working environment for all of our students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Smoking and secondhand smoke can increase a person's risk for heart disease, cancer, and respiratory problems, just to name a few. According to the Surgeon General, there is no safe exposure level to secondhand smoke. Additional goals of the policy would be to prevent tobacco use initiation and to support members of our community who are trying to quit and/or maintain a tobacco-free lifestyle.

❖ What about individual rights?

Prohibiting smoking campus preserves everyone's right to breathe clean, smoke-free air while allowing adults who smoke to continue to do so off-campus. This decision would support the rights and privileges of both smokers and non-smokers alike.

❖ Isn't this a violation of my civil rights?

No. There is no "right" to smoke under either state or federal law. In addition, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh administration has the authority to regulate the use of university owned and operated property.

❖ What is included in this policy?

For the purpose of this policy, "tobacco" is defined to include any lighted cigarette (including clove, bidis, kreteks), cigars, pipes, and hookah products; any other smoking products (such as e-cigarettes); and any smokeless, spit or spitless, dissolvable, or inhaled tobacco products, including but not limited to dip, chew, snuff or snus, in any form (such as orbs, sticks, pellet, etc.).

❖ Why are e-cigarettes included in this policy?

The FDA does not consider e-cigarettes to be a safe nicotine delivery system or cessation strategy. In 2016, the FDA finalized a policy to regulate e-cigarettes as tobacco products.

❖ Why is smokeless tobacco included in this policy since there are not secondhand effects?

Establishing a comprehensive policy that includes all forms of tobacco is more equitable, less confusing, and has better health outcomes. The policy consistently addresses health issues, because there is no safe form of tobacco. The makers of smokeless tobacco would have people believe that their products are "safer" than cigarettes and can even be used as an aid in quitting smoking. The fact is that chewing tobacco and snuff contain over 28 cancer-causing agents.

In addition, smokeless tobacco use often creates unwanted and sometimes hazardous waste and byproducts that can be spilled both outdoors and indoors. These spills create more cleanup work for campus maintenance staff and harm the environment.

❖ Are designated smoking areas available?

Designated smoking areas are not consistent with the philosophy of the policy. UWO's tobacco-free policy is intended to create a healthy environment to live, work, and learn. Smoking areas send a message that tobacco use is acceptable. Designated smoking areas also create confusion and are a compliance challenge. In fact, rarely do people comply with designated smoking areas.

❖ How would this policy be enforced?

We are an institution of higher education; therefore, education is the key to implementing this policy. We would make people aware of the tobacco-free environment through electronic information, signage, notices in event programs, and marketing. An explanation of the tobacco-free campus policy would be communicated to prospective and enrolling students and new employees. Additionally, we would ask event planners to include information about the policy in materials distributed to all outside groups that use university facilities. The expectation is that persons will voluntarily comply with the policy. It is the responsibility of everyone on campus to politely inform others of the policy and ask that they put out their cigarette and/or stop using tobacco products on campus.

❖ **What resources are available to those who want to quit using tobacco products?**

- **Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line**

The Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line offers free, 24/7 confidential, non-judgmental coaching and information about how to quit tobacco. Quit coaches help each caller develop an individualized quit plan. Call 1.800.QUIT.NOW or visit <http://ctri.wisc.edu/quitline.htm>

- **Become an Ex**

The EX Plan is a free cigarette quit smoking program based on scientific research and practical advice from ex-smokers. It isn't just about quitting smoking. It's about "re-learning life without cigarettes": This site offers information about how to re-learn how to live a cigarette free life. It uses a three step process, re-learning habit, re-learning addiction, and re-learning support. Through these three steps, users can get extra help from the Ex Community. Visit <http://www.becomeanex.org/>

- **Student Health Center Resources**

The Student Health Center can assist students who are trying to quit. Most insurances will cover tobacco cessation resources, and our healthcare providers are available to meet with students in need of these resources. If the policy is passed, the Student Health Center will also consider purchasing our own stock of nicotine replacement products so that students do not have to go off-campus to fill prescriptions.

❖ **How would this policy impact enrollment?**

Colleges and universities that make their campuses smoke-free or tobacco-free see no drop in applications or enrollment. While some students and/or campus administrators may worry about changes in enrollment as a result of a tobacco-free campus policy, **research suggests that a healthier campus culture is just as desirable to students** (Miller et al., 2015).

The American College Health Association adopted a policy to encourage colleges and universities to pursue 100% outdoor and indoor campus-wide tobacco-free campus policies. Current research suggests that campus administrators should consider these policies as part of comprehensive health promotion efforts rather than a reason to fear negative financial implications due to decreased student applications and enrollment.

❖ **How would this policy impact employee recruitment and retention?**

More than 2,100 institutions of higher education have adopted smoke-free policies, and of those, over 1,700 are 100% tobacco free. Tobacco-free is becoming the norm, both in university and other workplace settings. To date, there is no evidence attributing decreased enrollments to tobacco-free policies. Furthermore, there have been no reports of any school losing staff and faculty because of tobacco-free policies. In some cases, campuses have reported increases in applications.

❖ **How will this impact community members and businesses surrounding the campus?**

We will work with business owners and other property owners adjacent to university properties to address their concerns about the possibility of litter being left behind by tobacco users from our campus.